

American Opinion Summary

Department of State

Permanent file copy
Do not remove.

No. 108

October 30, 1962

1. Russia and Cuba
2. India-China Conflict

1. RUSSIA AND CUBA

We cannot relax yet, a number suggest. "The hours of touch and go in the past week...are warning enough of how perilous the world is that we live in; and the peril remains," the Baltimore Sun comments. The New York Times points out that assuming Khrushchev gets his missiles out of Cuba, "all the other great points of conflict between the free and Communist worlds remain."

Several express mistrust of Khrushchev (e.g. Hearst's N.Y. Journal-American, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Wall Street Journal). "Not until we see them on their way home, however, will it be prudent to rely on Khrushchev's promise to withdraw the Soviet missiles from Cuba," the San Francisco Chronicle says.

The New York Herald Tribune and Providence Journal suggest that Castro could still cause trouble.

Some see the possibility of a move to ease tensions on a broader base (e.g. Newark News, Kansas City Star, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Walter Lippmann). "The atmosphere is right...for a great detente," the New York Times suggests. The Washington Post says: "Men of good will everywhere must seek an alternative to war and the threat of war as an instrument of policy." The New York Post sees this as a time "for pushing ahead toward East-West settlements."

President Kennedy's leadership draws praise from several for its wisdom and moderation (e.g. Boston Herald, Wash. Post, Max Lerner, Walter Lippmann, Jos. Alsop). He was not swayed "either by the bellicose on the one extreme or by the faint of heart on the other," the Baltimore Sun suggests. Walter Lippmann praises him because "he sought a negotiated settlement which did not call for...an unconditional surrender." Lippmann adds: "Like a good general, the President has known what to go for and where to stop."

A few, however, advance criticisms. Sen. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) warns against a "firm pledge" never to invade Cuba, and some oppose a "guarantee" of Castro's survival (Honle and Wills on NBC). David Lawrence asserts we have "recognized the Soviet right to rule Cuba." The Hearst papers join these critics in advocating removal from the Administration of the "soft" advisors who opposed U.S. "air cover" at the Bay of Pigs, which might have averted the recent crisis.

Public Opinion Studies Staff • Bureau of Public Affairs

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- 2 -

2. INDIA-CHINA CONFLICT

Communist China's "villainous" invasion of northern India draws sharp condemnation (e.g., The Commonwealth; Detroit Free Press, Wash. Star, Denver Post, Cincinnati Enquirer, Milwaukee Journal).

There is wide support for granting emergency supplies of U.S. military arms and equipment as requested by Premier Nehru. "Naturally the Anglo-American answer would be affirmative despite disagreements in the past with some of India's policies and postures," declares the New York Times. This help should be "prompt and generous," says the Scripps-Howard press.

However, the Philadelphia Inquirer sees "good reason not to rush in blindly handing out largess we can't afford or weapons which might shortly be turned about and aimed at the Free World." So, the U.S. should help--but "with safeguards."

A number particularly welcome the conception of India being "jolted out of her illusion of peaceful co-existence" with Red China (e.g., Phila. Inquirer, Wash. Post, Balt. Sun, Newsweek). With others, the New York Herald Tribune adds that Moscow's siding with Peiping in this dispute "should provide a useful lesson to India and other neutrals which looked to the Kremlin as a potential ally."

Now "the time has come" for Nehru to "throw India's weight into the precarious East-West balance on the side of its self-evident interest," several urge (Kansas City Times, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Phila. Inquirer, Chicago News). The New York Times and St. Louis Post-Dispatch urge India and Pakistan to resolve their differences over Kashmir and unite against the Chinese aggression.

But India's continuing espousal of UN membership for Peiping evokes criticism (e.g., N.Y. Times, Los Angeles Times). The Philadelphia Inquirer finds this, under the circumstances, "shocking beyond reasonable explanation." Some also call on India to "sack" Krishna Menon as Defense Minister (e.g., Providence Journal, Wash. Post, Boston Herald). "Forgetting the past, but purely on the grounds our arms under his control would be wasted, we are entitled to insist" on this, declares the Washington News.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY